

Throughout the project year, teachers will engage their students in project-based learning opportunities that will result in the development of student-created Mars colonies and Web pages.

Mr. Speaker, as we move into the Millennium it is important to engage the public in science and technology. The Adler's work with the Mars Millennium Program through the StarRider™ Theater and the reopening of their historic dome marks the advent of new era for the Adler Planetarium and Astronomy Museum.

CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS
ADVOCACY

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, for the past decade, the Center for Human Rights Advocacy (CHRA), a public interest law firm based in my congressional district, has been monitoring and analyzing social, economic, political, and ethnic problems and anti-Semitic activities in Russia and the former Soviet Union. The organization's President and Chief Counsel, Mr. William Cohen, is frequently called upon in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom to provide expert information and testimony pertaining to human rights and anti-Semitism in Russia and the former Soviet Union. Mr. Cohen also serves on the board of the executive committee of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews.

The primary focus of Mr. Cohen's advocacy "is to make sure the doors remain open for Jews and all persecuted minorities." His recent report, "The Escalation of Anti-Semitic Violence in Russia," demonstrates the level of danger facing Russian Jews in light of the increased frequency of anti-Semitic activity.

The report documents the chronology of the latest anti-Semitic events in Russia and the former Soviet Union. Much of this information has never been reported in the media. Mr. Cohen has gleaned most of this information from clients seeking asylum or refugee status.

Following is the summary of Mr. Cohen's report. I urge my colleagues to contact my office or the Center for Human Rights Advocacy in Boulder, Colorado, for a copy of the full report.

THE ESCALATION OF ANTI-SEMITIC
VIOLENCE IN RUSSIA

(By William M. Cohen)

I. SUMMARY: ANTI-SEMITISM AND PERSECUTION
OF JEWS IN RUSSIA HAS DRAMATICALLY AC-
CELERATED.

The Center for Human Rights Advocacy (CHRA) has been monitoring and analyzing social, economic, political, ethnic and anti-Semitism developments in Russia and the former Soviet Union (FSU) since its inception in early 1991. In addition, because of the persistent evidence and reports of anti-Semitism in Russia, the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews (UCSJ), on which the author serves as a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors, has steadily increased its monitoring and reporting on human rights and anti-Semitism in Russia. In cooperation with the Moscow Helsinki Group, and aided by a grant from the United States Agency for International Development, trained monitors located throughout

Russia now regularly report to UCSJ and CHRA on this growing phenomenon.

The persistent pattern of anti-Semitism and the pernicious practice of persecution of Jews in Russia was identified and summarized by CHRA in March of 1996:

"This phenomenon [i.e., steadily growing anti-Semitism] is an atmosphere of economic hardship following the breakup of the FSU] is exploited by politicians and elected officials for political gain. It is manifested by acts of discrimination, insults, threats, and violence against Jews, Jewish property, and Jewish institutions. It is aimed, in substantial part, at driving Jews out of Russia to make room for Russians in a time of scarcity, economic distress, and political instability arising out of the destruction of the Soviet Empire. Moreover, it is clear that there now exists no Russian governmental agency able or willing to protect Jews from persecution because of their nationality or religion. The absence of any meaningful deterrent to such conduct plus the permission given to anti-Semites by leading politicians and elected officials to engage in such conduct encourages those who would persecute Jews to do so with impunity.

Since the economic crisis and the collapse of the ruble which struck Russian in August 1998, anti-Semitic expressions by leading politicians and elected officials, aimed at demonizing and scapegoating Jews, and, ultimately, at driving them out of Russia, have dramatically accelerated. This increase in anti-Semitic rhetoric has been accompanied by a concurrent increase in the number of violent acts targeting Jews, Jewish property, and Jewish institutions. Such violence is now frequent and widespread throughout the vast number of Russia's regions as well as in the major city centers of Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Nizhny Novgorod, the location of the three largest population of Jews in Russia.

The frequency and ferocity of the various anti-Semitic violent acts appears to be accelerating. At the same time, the governmental institutions upon which Jews and other targeted minorities must rely for protection against extremist violence are either unable or unwilling to effectively provide that protection.

In addition, during the political and economic crises which continue today in Russia following the August 1998 collapse, militantly anti-Semitic groups, such as Russian National Unity (RNU), have grown in size and popularity. Sensing both the impotence and indifference of law enforcement agencies, these groups have increased the openness of their anti-Semitic expressions with little or no effective action by government authorities to deter them. Under these circumstances, Jews in Russia continue to be vulnerable to anti-Semitic discrimination, violence, and persecution without any effective recourse to the Russian government at any level for protection against such prejudicial treatment.

Indeed, the risk to Jews in Russia today is greater than at any time since the breakup of the Soviet Union. The Russian government has so far demonstrated that it is both unwilling and unable to deter growing anti-Semitic violence against its steadily diminishing Jewish population. Hence, those aimed at driving Jews out of Russia, punishing them because of hatred of Jews, and scapegoating Jews for a variety of political ends can generally do so with impunity.

Faced with escalating anti-Semitic violence combined with indifference to these attacks by the general Russian populace, political exploitation of the phenomenon and government impotence to protect them, the Jewish community has resorted to funding its own security for Jewish institutions and

turned to Western governments and non-governmental human rights organizations for help. Increasingly more Jews are also leaving Russia and the FSU permanently for Israel, the United States and other countries where they will be free from persecution because of their Jewish religion and nationality.

Absent a dramatic change in the economic, social and political climate in Russia, it is highly unlikely that the current atmosphere of openly and violently expressed anti-Semitism will diminish any time soon. To the contrary, the escalating incidents combined with government silence and ineffective law enforcement, indicate that Jews are at great risk in Russia today and for the foreseeable future.

This Report will first document the chronology of recent anti-Semitic events which demonstrate both the increased frequency and level of danger which accompanies them as well as the Russian Jewish Community's reaction. Next it catalogues the Western governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGO)'s response to this growing problem. Finally, it outlines the less than adequate, largely rhetorical response by the Russian Government to this problem.

HONORING PEGGY BRAVERMAN

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the Bronx is losing one of its most distinguished public servants and a woman who has done more for her borough and her community than we can ever thank her for. Peggy Braverman is retiring after more than 15 years as Deputy County Clerk for the Bronx where she oversaw a staff of more than 80 people as they helped residents secure business certificates, passports, and other significant documents while answering questions about jury duty and other matters.

She was always active in her community and the political arena. She was an administrative assistant in the Bronx Borough President's office from 1979 to 1985 and before that she served as an administrative assistant for then Councilman, now Assemblyman Stephen Kaufman. She was also Democratic District Leader for the 81st Assembly District.

At least as extensive was her work in the voluntary area. She was an active member of the Educational Jewish Center, the Morris Park Community Association, the Allerton Avenue Homeowners Association and the 49th Precinct Community Council. She also served as President of the PTA of Christopher Columbus High School and Vice President of JHS 135. She was also a scout leader.

Peggy Braverman is that rare person who serves her neighborhood and her fellow citizens in so many capacities, someone, who by their service, does so much to make government work and the community prosper. The people of the Bronx will miss her in government; let us hope we can keep her helping in the community. I want to join her legion of friends and admirers in wishing her in retirement what she has learned—the very best from life.